

Police suspect friend

From Page 1 Col 7
video cassette while the VCI was reported missing from Flat No 701-2 on the sixth floor of the nine-storey government rest house Elyseum at Hathkolia Road.

Police said they had found clear clues that those responsible for the murder had tried to break open the wardrobe in the bedroom. Other places had also been rummaged for valuables which they could not find.

The source added that investigating officers were now more or less convinced that Ambia Begum, the 40-year-old maidservant dismissed by Isha's mother three days before the crime, had nothing to do with the murder. Nor for that matter, police believe, was Harun Mia, the receptionist at the apartment block, had anything to do with it. Both were arrested Wednesday.

Ambia Begum, who had returned to the house of her former mistress on the day of occurrence, was initially accused by the slain boy's mother of the murder. Ambia insisted on her innocence, saying she had returned to seek forgiveness but found the door to the flat ajar with nobody inside.

Branch (DB) police continued interrogation of three persons in connection with the murder.

The DB produced Ambia Begum and Harun Mia before the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate yesterday. At the request of the police the court placed the two preliminary suspects on four days' remand for questioning.

Harun Mia was picked up for questioning after a look at the register revealed that he had failed to enter the names of any visitors entering the apartment complex on the day.

According to DB sources, one Mubassher Hossain Caesar, 19, reported to be a friend of the slain Isha, was also brought to the Minto Road office of the DB for questioning. However, police insisted Caesar, son of one Motaahar Hossain, a Deputy Secretary in the Relief ministry and resident of the same Elyseum apartments, was not under arrest.

Meanwhile, the parents took Isha's body, after autopsy at the Mitford Hospital, to Dargapara in Rajshahi town for burial yesterday.

JSD (Rab) to march to PM's office Nov 8

By Staff Correspondent

The Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD) (Rab) plans to march towards the Prime Minister's office on November 8.

The announcement was made at a rally organised by the JSD (Rab) following their foiled "Secretariat gherao" programme in the capital yesterday.

The JSD organised the siege programme — aborted by the police — to demand national elections under an interim administration headed by an ombudsman.

Witnesses said police fired tear gas shells and used batons to disperse the few processionists during the planned gherao.

JSD activists, numbering about a hundred, blasted crackers and hurled bricks at the police when they intercepted small processions near the Topkhana crossing and the GPO, witnesses said.

The processionists damaged two buses in front of the GPO.

Speaking at the rally near Purana Paltan, JSD leader A S M Abdur Rab condemned the police action and urged the government to accept their demand.

The JSD will also stage a demonstration on October 23 to protest the police action on its workers.

4 armed NDP men held in Raozan

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Oct 20: Police arrested four activists of the National Democratic Party (NDP) during a raid in Gujra village under Raozan thana Wednesday midnight.

One LMG, two rifles and some ammunition were recovered from their possession.

Acting on a tip-off police went into action when a group of NDP activists were preparing to launch an attack on the house of one Fazal Hoque.

The activists started firing at the police who also fired in retaliation. Police managed to arrest four of them while the others fled.

The arrested are Md Didar, Nurul Absar, Ali Akbar and Abdul Hoque.

Barin Datta

From Page 1 Col 8

respect to comrade Datta.

They included Deputy Leader of the Opposition in the Parliament and Awami League leader Abdus Samad Azad, Workers Party leader Rashed Khan Menon MP, Haidar Akbar Khan Rano, Jatiya Samajtantrik Party Leader Hasanul Haq Inu, Gano Forum leader Saifuddin Ahmed Manik and Ganatantri Party leader Ahmedul Kabir.

Born in 1911 in Sylhet, comrade Datta joined the then anti-British movement in his boyhood. He played a pioneering role in organising the historic Nankar movement and later the country's independence movement.

Almost all the 25 years of Pakistan period he was wanted by the police for his political ideals and activities.

The Communist Party of Bangladesh will observe October 25 as mourning day.

Sea Resources Ltd

From Page 1 Col 5

to the company within 14 days of receipt of the order.

Accordingly, DC Chittagong ordered the return of the goods under the supervision of a magistrate with proper inventory. Under the plea of administrative difficulties, the authorities delayed the delivery of the goods, it is reported.

Sea Resources Group sources also complained that not only goods worth Tk 39 lakh had not been returned, but also the condition of the materials received back is deplorable and those have become unfit for use in fishing trawlers.

The company has already appointed the internationally famed Lloyd's Survey Company to survey the extent of damage caused to the spare parts and fishing materials during the custody of the Customs authority in five months.

The company is apprehending that the damage would amount to crores of taka.

It also sought proper departmental probe into how goods under customs or police custody could go missing.

Tributes paid to Sultan

Speakers at a condolence meeting in the city yesterday paid tributes to S M Sultan saying the internationally reputed late painter was an outstanding creative genius who projected the life and hopes of the people of rural Bangla in his works, reports BSS.

They said Sultan had carved a niche for himself, making him a legend in his own lifetime.

The function, organised by the Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy to pay homage to one of the great sons of the soil who died earlier this month, was attended by Agriculture Minister M Majid-ul Haq as chief guest.

Held at the academy auditorium, it was addressed by noted artists, educationists and intellectuals including Mubarak Hossain Khan, Subir Chowdhury, Dr Syed Manzoorul Islam, Sadek Khan, Rafikunnabi, Khan Ataur Rahman, Hashem Khan, Sajjad Kadir and Shafi Kamal, Secretary of the Ministry of Cultural Affairs, Moklesur Rahman present.

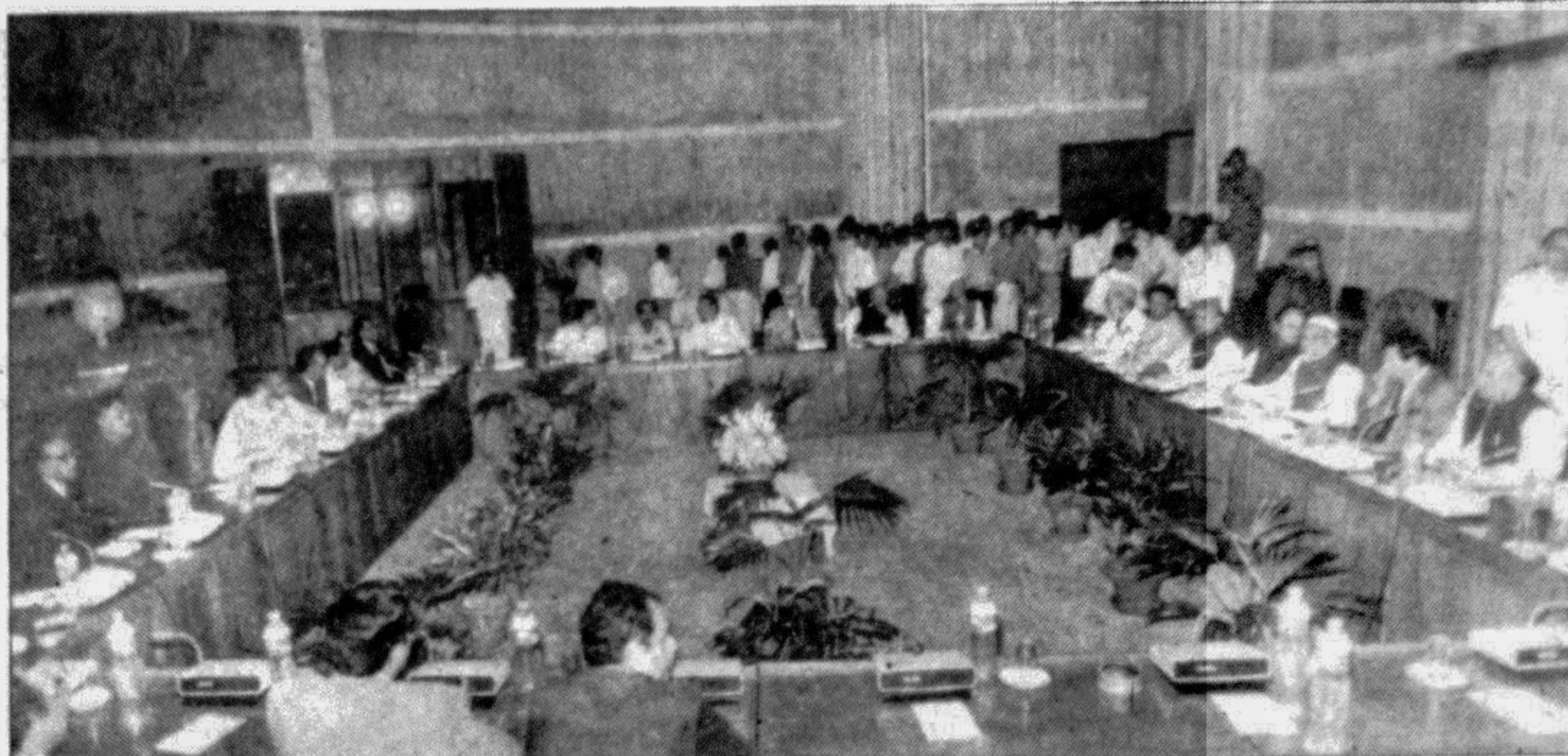
Injunction on DUTA

By Staff Correspondent

A sub-judge yesterday issued an interim injunction restraining the Dhaka University Teachers' Association (DUTA) from implementing its decision to expel Dr Ershadul Bari.

Sub-judge Golam Mortuza Majumder also passed an order asking 15 executive members of the DUTA to show cause within 7 days why the decision of expulsion of Dr Bari from DUTA membership should not be declared illegal, according to a press release issued by Advocate Md Mizanur Rahman.

The DUTA expelled Dr Bari, the dean of the faculty of Law, on July 29 alleging that he had opposed the playing of the national anthem at the opening ceremony of the senate session of the National University.



The Commonwealth-mediated Government-Opposition Dialogue in progress at the Sangsad Bhavan yesterday evening. — Star photo

Dialogue begins

From Page 1 Col 5

General Secretary Zillur Rahman, Tofael Ahmed MP, Abdul Jalil, Opposition Chief Whip Mohammad Nasim, Advocate Abdur Rahim and Sheikh Harun-ur Rashid of Awami League, Moudud Ahmed MP, Anwar Hossain Manju MP and Monirul Haq Chowdhury MP of Jatiya Party, Moulana Matiar Rahman Nizami MP, Moulana Abdus Sobhan MP and Sheikh Ansar Ali MP of Jamaat-e-Islami, Suranjit Sengupta MP of Ganatantri Party, Salahuddin Kader Chowdhury MP of NDP, and Moulana Obaidul Huq MP of IOJ.

The entire proceedings of the talks were taped to enable Sir Ninian Stephen hear the conversation, sources said. An English translation of the proceedings would soon be handed over to Sir Ninian, the Commonwealth Secretary General's emissary for facilitating a 'productive dialogue'.

Two other opposition parties in Parliament — the Gana Forum (GF) and the Workers Party (WP) — were not represented in the Opposition delegation.

general elections under a caretaker government and the ruling party's refusal to meet the demand. The opposition has been boycotting Parliament proceedings since March last to realise the demand.

Meanwhile, sources close to the leaders attending the dialogue said Abdus Samad Azad asserted that the nation was left with no option but to go for a constitutional provision for general elections under a non-partisan caretaker government.

It is a must because the history of polls in the country shows that the voters can exercise their franchise freely only in the elections held under a non-partisan administration, the AL leader told the meeting.

On the other hand, Prof Badruddoza Chowdhury maintained that the government was committed to introducing a fool-proof electoral system and it was possible giving more powers to the Election Commission, sources added.

The dialogue was adjourned till 6:30 pm tomorrow.

Sources in the AL said party general Secretary Zillur Rahman and presidium member Abdur Jalil were included in the Opposition team as desired by Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina a few hours before the dialogue.

The BNP did not object to the inclusion of the two non-MPs in the opposition team but added two more members to its delegation. Originally both the teams were to comprise 13 members each.

After the talks yesterday, the ruling party delegation met Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia. The Opposition team reviewed the situation at a meeting.



Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia inaugurating boring shafts at the Madhyapara Hardrock Project in Dinajpur district yesterday. — PID photo

Madhyapara hardrock

From Page 1 Col 7

expenses will be borne by the Bangladesh government.

Excavation of two 5-metre dia shafts to lift the mineral from a depth of 243-287 metre below the surface is in progress.

A huge reserve of high quality hardrock is lying in a vast area of which 1.44 square kilometers will be taken up for extraction in the first phase by a North Korean company, a Canadian consultancy firm, in a survey in 1976-77, confirmed the economic feasibility of the rock deposit discovered in 1974.

Begum Zia said hardrock which can be used in construction of flood control embankments, roads, bridges, railway ballast slippers, river training and making of floor tiles will make a significant contribution to the national economy.

Some 570 people will be employed at the project which is also likely to create nearly 10,000 indirect employment opportunities.

The Prime Minister said it is undeniable that energy and mineral resources play a substantial role in the overall development of the country. This is why the government has taken steps to attract foreign investment in the oil and gas sectors, she added.

She further said that an agreement has already been signed with a foreign company to explore coal reserves in this region.

"A bright horizon full of promise beckons us. Based on experts' opinion, data, statistics, and available information, it can be safely concluded that we do not lag behind in mineral resources," the Prime Minister said.

The 21st century will be a century where the fittest will survive. We shall have to untidely tap our development potentials keeping this future scenario in our mind," she added.

Begum Zia said her government has been working with the long-term objective of achieving self-reliance and economic prosperity through proper exploration and extraction of the country's mineral resources.

She said construction of Jamuna Bridge, extraction from the Barapukuria coalmine and Madhyapara hardrock mine are not isolated events. "Strengthening the socio-economic condition of the long neglected north-western region is part of our development plans."

She said with the grace of Almighty Allah her government has succeeded in fulfilling the pledges made to the nation.

"Extraction of hardrock from this project will be a blessing from Allah, not merely for any particular segment or group, but for every citizen of the country."

She thanked the officers and employees of the Bangladesh Geological Survey for discovering this mine, and Petrobangla and others involved in the extraction of hardrock.

The function was addressed by Energy and Mineral Resources Minister Dr Khandaker Mosharrar Hossain, Vice Chairman of the Trade Commission for Foreign Economic Relations of North Korea Kim Chu Song, Law and Parliamentary Affairs Minister Mirza Golam Hafiz, State Minister for Social Welfare Fazlur Rahman, local Awami League MP Mustafizur Rahman, Begum Khurshid Jahán Huq MP, Energy Secretary Foyzur Razzak and S K Mohammad Abdullah.

country."

She thanked the officers and employees of the Bangladesh Geological Survey for discovering this mine, and Petrobangla and others involved in the extraction of hardrock.

The function was addressed by Energy and Mineral Resources Minister Dr Khandaker Mosharrar Hossain, Vice Chairman of the Trade Commission for Foreign Economic Relations of North Korea Kim Chu Song, Law and Parliamentary Affairs Minister Mirza Golam Hafiz, State Minister for Social Welfare Fazlur Rahman, local Awami League MP Mustafizur Rahman, Begum Khurshid Jahán Huq MP, Energy Secretary Foyzur Razzak and S K Mohammad Abdullah.

20 hurt in Habiganj clash

From Staff Correspondent

SYLHET, Oct 20: At least 20 people were injured — two sustaining bullet wounds — in a clash between the supporters of two clubs of Habiganj town last night.

Some 30 gun shots were fired and 40 crackers exploded during the three-hour violence which began at about 7:30 pm, between supporters of the Dragon Club and the Lions Club, creating panic in the town.

Habiganj police arrested four youngsters this morning. Among the arrested, Eja Chowdhury, 21 and Abdul Ahad, 22, received bullet wounds and had to be admitted to the Habiganj Sadar Hospital, police said.

Bribing: British minister quits

LONDON, Oct 20: Tim Smith, a junior minister in Prime Minister John Major's government, has tendered his resignation over allegations he accepted cash for asking parliamentary questions, ITN News said today, reports Reuter.

Major's office said they could not confirm the report. "We have nothing at this stage," a spokesman said.

Earlier a government source said Smith was probably going to have to resign.

"His position is untenable and it looks as if he is going to have to resign," the source said.

No Bangladeshi

From Page 1 Col 8

A meeting of the chief ministers of the northeastern states would be held at Shillong on October 28 to discuss the issue and the Union Minister of State for Internal Security, Rajesh Pilot, was scheduled to attend.



Suranjit Sengupta, MP presenting a bouquet to Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina at the Ramna restaurant in the city yesterday marking the formal merger of his now-defunct Ganatantri Party with the Awami League. — Star photo

GP merges with AL

From Page 1 Col 8

Quamruzzaman, Shamsul Haq, Rahmat Ali and Nurul Islam Nahid were present on the occasion.

Welcoming the newcomers to her party, Hasina urged them to work unitedly with the AL workers.

Hasina urged the government not to push the nation towards a situation of confrontation by ignoring the 'popular' demand for elections under a caretaker administration.

The leader of the Opposition in Parliament alleged that the demand was not being accepted by the present rulers with the motive of rigging polls and thus clinging to power.

Commonwealth-brokered government-Opposition dialogue should not be allowed to fall due to obstinacy of the government side, she said. Referring to the ruling party's contention that polls under a caretaker government was unconstitutional, the AL chief said the Constitution also did not provide for the caretaker government that conducted the 1991 polls. But the BNP accepted that government which was later 'constitutionalised', she added.

Hasina said from the fifth to the 10th amendments to the Constitution were made just to protect individual or group in-

terests and to legalise capture of power by illegal rulers. "But we want the government to move a Constitution amendment bill on the caretaker issue to protect people's franchise."

Holding of at least three consecutive national elections under non-party government will ensure free and fair polls and give democracy an institutional shape, she reiterated.

Hasina said they had opted for a caretaker government to conduct the 1991 polls following vote dacoity, terrorism and corruption by the autocratic regime of Ershad. "We now again demand similar elections since the elected BNP government has practised the same."

The AL chief said she believed that holding of three consecutive general elections under non-party administrations would stabilise the national politics, check undemocratic behaviour and ensure accountability of the elected government.

Suranjit Sengupta said they had decided to merge with the AL to further strengthen the party, the 'biggest platform for secular politics'.

He also urged Hasina to coordinate the units of both the parties across the country.

Sengupta hoped that the AL would not compromise with the fundamentalists.

The Midnight File

Six killed in US plane crash

SELLERSBURG, Ind., Oct 20: A twin-engine plane flying in heavy fog crashed into a quarry, killing all six people aboard. The crash occurred Wednesday night as the plane, which originated in Dayton, Ohio, approached Clark County Airport in Sellersburg, about 16 kilometers north of Louisville. First reports gave the number of dead at five, but state police dispatcher Julie Richner said another body was discovered as authorities were removing the victims, reports AP.

ROK urges US not to hold exercises

WASHINGTON, Oct 20: South Korea has asked the United States not to hold joint team spirit military exercises this year, a state department official said today. The request comes a day ahead of the Friday signing in Geneva of a pact between the United States and North Korea that would freeze Pyongyang's nuclear programme, reports AFP.

Tender for choppers

From Page 1 Col 7

Asiatic Trade Ltd, M/s Meridian Consolidated (pvt) Ltd, Orient Aviation Services, Riverland Agencies, Sunhill Trading (pvt) Ltd, MS Napin, Aviaexport and Rabit Trading.

The quoted price of the third and the seventh lowest bidders are 1,450,000 US dollars and 2,990,000 dollars.

The evaluation was made in June.

The DGDP later pointed out that the choppers offered by the third lowest bidder were not the 1994 model which was the primary preference in the tender.

The authorities constituted a two-member committee to investigate the matter. The committee asked the firm concerned to explain why had they mentioned that the choppers offered by it were manufactured in 1994 although the principal supplier had said it was manufactured in 1993.

In a reply, the firm said they thought they would be able to supply the 1994 model after consultation with their principal company based in Russia. The chief executive of the firm also said that within a few days, they expressed their inability to supply the required 1994 model because the principal company said that the 1994 models were not readily available.

The letter sent to the probe body by the firm also said that there was no difference — as regards technical specification — between the 1992, 1993 and 1994 models which all have 20-year lifespan each.

The third lowest bidder said that it was their intention to supply the 1994 models and

also to give a financial benefit of three million dollars.

The company also issued a legal notice against the chief of the probe body and three others alleging irregularities.

Earlier, the Tax Payers Association of Bangladesh also issued a legal notice charging the authorities concerned and top political leaders of failure to uphold the country's interests.

A government clarification issued earlier said that the third lowest bidder tried to push through a different type of helicopter Mi-8 MTV made for domestic use in Russia and not suitable for the weather condition in Bangladesh. They also failed to produce the required certificate from the manufacturers of the helicopters. So the offer was rejected.

In reply, the firm said that there was no difference between Mi-8 MTV and Mi-17 helicopters and only for marketing strategy it is called Mi-17 outside Russia.

Clash over Azam's public meet in Rajshahi

RAJSHAHI, Oct 20: Five people, including a police and a journalist, were injured in violent clashes between Islam Chhatra Shibir and Ghatik Dalal Nirml Committee activists here today, reports UNB.

Police fired six tear-gas shells to disperse the clashes that erupted following Jamaat leader Golam Azam's presence in the city to address a public meeting tomorrow.

The Nirml Committee has called a dawn-to-dusk hartal in the city tomorrow to protest Golam Azam's visit and his scheduled public meeting. It announced the programme on Wednesday.

Witnesses said clashes took place when processions of the two groups encountered at Saheb Bazar Moni square at around 7:15 pm.

Police, posted nearby, intervened and lobbed tear-gas shells to disperse them.

Demand for division

Rail, road blockade in Mymensingh

From Our Correspondent

MYMENSINGH, Oct 20: Road and rail communication between the capital and the northern part of the country remained suspended for more than 12 hours as the people here enforced a day-long road and rail blockade. The precipitate actions was designed to drum up support for the demand for making Mymensingh an administrative division.

The Mymensingh Division Implementation Action Council organised the blockade that started from 6 am and continued till 6 pm in the evening.

Railway communication with 12 destinations in the country's north and south-west districts remained suspended as people manned barricades on the tracks.

The Action Council also held a rally near the Charpara crossing in the town. The speakers urged the government to declare Mymensingh a division immediately.

Khalequzzaman Khaleq presided over the meeting.

Processions

From Page 1 Col 7

said at the rally that at least three elections should be held under caretaker governments. He urged the government to accept the 'national demand'.

Terming the present government 'undemocratic', JP leader Moudud Ahmed alleged that the government was ignoring the demand of the majority people.

He warned that the Opposition would take to the streets to force the government to concede to their demand if the dialogue failed.

The other JP leaders, Khaleudur Rahman, Col (Retd) Abdul Malek, Monirul Haq Chowdhury and Mahabubul Haq Dolan led the procession.

The procession dispersed at the Maghbar crossing after parading through Purana Paltan, Bijoynagar, Shantinagar and Mouchak areas.

The Jamaat-e-Islami brought out a procession from the North gate of the Baitul Mukarram mosque at about 4 pm yesterday.

Jamaat leaders including Maulana Matiar Rahman Nizami addressed a rally before the procession started.

The Jamaat rally dispersed near its central office at Maghbar.

The Jamaat activists chanted slogans in support of the demand for a caretaker government.

Kafco

From Page 1 Col 8

guration ceremony soon.

The gas based fertiliser factory will require some 61.5 mcf of gas per day when it starts trial production. As per agreement, the government was committed to supplying this after December 1.

To ensure this huge supply, the government had taken up two projects with a US dollar 14 million Japanese fund. One of the two projects installation of two pipelines in the Bakhrabad system had already ensured supply of 30 mcf per day. The second project — drilling and extraction at the Feni-2 gas field — will ensure another 25 mcf of gas. The work at the Feni field began August 15 and is scheduled to be completed in three months, official sources said.

Kafco authorities, however, had always been feeling uncertain about proper supply of gas. On the other hand, the Energy Ministry marked the schemes for gas supply to Kafco a top priority.

A top Petrobangla official told The Daily Star, "Kafco authorities should understand that the government is pledge bound to supply gas as per agreement. It need not worry about the gas supply."

US-DPRK

From Page 1 Col 4

United States and North Korea to freeze, dismantle and eventually replace North Korea's nuclear programme could significantly delay international atomic energy agency inspections, IAEA director Hans Blix said in Vienna today.

Blix said North Korea's commitment to accept verification by the Vienna-based IAEA of its nuclear inventory was welcome, "but there could be a further significant delay before the required full compliance with the safeguards agreement."

Meanwhile US Defence Secretary William Perry arrived in South Korea tonight for a brief visit during which he is expected to discuss new security arrangements following the pact with North Korea.